

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PLAB

SUBJECT: MAY DAY 1973 - UNITY OR TRINITY?

REF: PARIS 09350

1. SUMMARY: THIS YEAR 'S MAY DAY PARADE DEMONSTRATIONS IN PARIS FAILED AS DISPLAY OF WORKER- STUDENT- GAUCHESTE UNITY SOUGHT BY CGT AND CFDT. THERE WERE, IN FACT, THREE DISTINCT MARCHES. THE FIRST WAS A FORENOON STROLL FROM PLACE DES FETES TO NATION BY SOME 500 MAOISTS, " FRONT ROUGE" FOLLOWERS, ADHERENTS OF FRENCH AND SPANISH MARXIST- LENINISTS GROUPS, AND REPRESENTATIVES OF INDO- CHIA- PALESTINE COMMITTEE. SECOND GROUP WAS AN AMALGAM OF STUDENTS (LYCEES AND UNIVERSITY) (ABOUT 3000) AND EXTREME LEFT ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING COMMUNIST LEAGUE, LUTTE OUVRIERE, REFOLUTIONARY MARXIST ALLIANCE AND OTHERS, TOTALING ABOUT 10,000. THIS SECOND GROUP MARCHED FROM PLACE DE LA REPUBLIQUE TO HOTEL DE VILLE WHERE IT JOINED MAIN BODY FOR THE MARCH VIA BASTILLE TO THE PLACE DE LA ATION. THIRD GROUP, WHICH WAS MAIN BODY, TOTALED ABOUT 30,000 PERSONS AND CONSISTED LARGELY OF CGT/ CFDT AND FEN (NATIONAL EDUCATION), PLUS LARGE CONTINGENTS OF SPANISH AND NORTH AFRICAN IMMIGRANT WORKERS. AS PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED, FORCE OUVRIERE DID NOT PARTICIPATE. END SUMMARY.

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2. BRIEF ENCOUNTER BETWEEN POLICE AND DIEHARD ELEMENTS WHICH REFUSED TO DISPERSE UPON REACHING PLACE DE LA NATION, PROVIDED ONLY SERIOUS VIOLENCE OF THE DAY. ANARCHISTS REPORTEDLY TRIED TO FORCE ENTRY INTO CGT MAIN LINE OF MARCH, BUT WERE FINALLY REPULSED BY CGT WARDENS. THERE WAS ALSO BRIEF BUT ROUGH CONFRONTATION BETWEEN CGT MARCHERS AND POLICE.

3. STUDENT BANNERS CALED FOR END OF " SOCIAL SELECTION" IN UNIVERSITY RESTORATION OF DRAFT DEFERRALS, SCRAPPING OF DEUG (REFTEL), AND END OF US BOMBING IN CAMBODIA. IMMIGRANT PLACARDS DEMANDED FAIR TREATMENT AND REINSTATEMENT OF OS WORKERS FIRED AT RENAULAT. CFDT BANNERS CALED FOR NEW INDUSTRIAL SOEICTY BASED ON AUTOGESTION. CGT PLACARDS AND CHANGS PUSHED COMMON PROGRAM GOALS: SMIC ANT 1100 FRANCS FOR 40 HOURS, RETIREMENT AT AGE 60 AND GREATER TRADE UNION FREEDOM.

4. STUDENT PARTICIPANTS WERE HARDCORE MILITANTS WHO CAN BE COUNTED UPON TO TAKE TO THE STREETS FOR ALMOST ANY LEFT- WING CAUSE. THE FACT THAT THE COMMUNIST LEAGUE CHOSE TO PARADE WITH STUDENTS ADDS TO EXISTING EVIDENCE THAT THE LEAGUE REGARDS STUDENT BODY AS PRIME RECRUITING GROUND.

5. ALTHOUGH MAJORITY OF STUDENTS' SLOGANS DEALT WITH QUESTION OF MILITARY DEFERRMENTS, WE FEEL THAT THIS ISSUE HAS BEEN LARGELY DEFUSED BY ANNOUNCED GOF POLICY TO APPLY THE DEBRE LAW WITH FLEXIBILITY PENDING 15 MAY NATIONAL ASSEMBLY DEBATE ON ENTIRE ISSUE. IN ANY CASE, VAST MAJORITY OF LYCEE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS RESUMED CLASSES AFTER EASTER VACATION, WITH ONLY SPORADIC INCIDENCE OF STRIKES AT ONE OR TWO UNIVERSITIES. STUDENT MILITANCY PROBABLY COOLED BY GOF CAUTION TO PARENTS AND STUDENTS THAT CONTINUED AGITATION COULD AFFECT STUDENT ELIGIBILITY FOR END- OF- YEAR EXAMS, AND PAYMENT OF FAMILY EDUCATION ALLOWANCES.

6. POLICE ACTION AGAINST " GAUCHISTE" ELEMENTS, MORE DECISIVE AND PROMPT THAN HERETOFORE, SUGGESTS EITHER FOREKNOWLEDGE OF THEIR INTENT TO PROVOKE AN INCIDENT, OR - AS WE ARE INCLINED TO THINK- AN NEW DETERMINATION TO DENY " GAUCHISTES" THE OPPORTUNITY TO GRANDSTAND FOR STUDENT SUPPORT, AND TO DEMONSTRATE GOF ABILITY TO REPRESS ILLEGAL STREET VIOLENCE WITH FIRMNESS. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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7. NOTABLY ABSENT FROM MAY DAY EXERCISE WAS FO, WHICH USED OPPORTUNITY TO DRAW FARTHER APART FROM CGT/ CFDT RHETORIC AND STRATEGY. ON SEVERAL
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